

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 128

Introduced by Assembly Member Ting

April 1, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 128—Relative to Living Schoolyard Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 128, as introduced, Ting. Living Schoolyard Month.

This measure would designate the month of May 2014 as Living Schoolyard Month, and would urge the State Department of Education to continue to prioritize the design and construction of student-accessible green space on school campuses and to integrate use of this space into the teaching of standards-based curriculum.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Urban development often disconnects communities
- 2 from natural systems, wildlife, and seasonal changes; and
- 3 WHEREAS, Environmental sustainability has become a high
- 4 priority in urban planning and design, and should be incorporated
- 5 in construction and renovation of schools; and
- 6 WHEREAS, On-campus green space designs have environmental
- 7 benefits such as rainwater collection, urban carbon and runoff
- 8 sequestration, air quality improvement, and ecological resiliency;
- 9 and
- 10 WHEREAS, Schools can benefit their surrounding communities
- 11 through thoughtful design and use of their grounds, paying mind
- 12 to local ecological, social, and cultural context; and

1 WHEREAS, The amount of time the average American child
2 spends outdoors and distance traveled from the home unsupervised
3 are in constant decline; and

4 WHEREAS, Childhood obesity and its related health issues have
5 become a public policy concern in the United States and California,
6 particularly in low-income communities; and

7 WHEREAS, Children spend a significant portion of their day
8 on their school campuses, amounting to at least 840 instructional
9 hours per year from grades 1 to 3, inclusive and up to 1,080 hours
10 for grades 9 to 12, inclusive; and

11 WHEREAS, An ecological schoolyard setting provides a
12 peaceful, comfortable, and aesthetically pleasant environment for
13 students, particularly for those students who lack the desire or
14 ability to engage in competitive, fast-paced, or more structured
15 activities; and

16 WHEREAS, Ecological schoolyard play encourages
17 collaborative and cooperative play, reducing the aggression that
18 occurs on traditional playgrounds; and

19 WHEREAS, An on-campus green space, such as a school garden,
20 is a fundamental component of a school environment intended to
21 include and empower students, giving them a sense of place and
22 community; and

23 WHEREAS, Schools are devoted to nurturing each child's
24 physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development and ability
25 to assess challenging situations and make intelligent choices; and

26 WHEREAS, Children should be given the opportunity to reflect
27 and embrace their local ecological, social, and cultural context in
28 both recreational and instructional settings; and

29 WHEREAS, Outdoor classrooms provide clearer context for
30 standards-based instruction in life and physical sciences, health
31 and nutrition, and social science; and

32 WHEREAS, Outdoor activity is essential to learning, health,
33 and the overall quality of student life; and

34 WHEREAS, The Instructional School Gardens Program has
35 been established by the Legislature for the promotion, creation,
36 and support of instructional school gardens; now, therefore, be it

37 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
38 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates the month of
39 May 2014 as Living Schoolyard Month and urges the State
40 Department of Education to continue to prioritize the design and

1 construction of student-accessible green space on school campuses
2 and to integrate use of this space into the teaching of
3 standards-based curriculum; and be it further
4 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
5 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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